Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Thursday 28th November, 10.00-12.00
Trinity Board Room, Trinity Business School

Present: Chair, Mary Kelly, Chief Operating Officer (Orla Cunningham), Vice Provost (Orla Sheils), Librarian and College Archivist (Helen Shenton), Dean of STEM (Sylvia Draper), Deputy CFO (Patrick Moore), and Mr. M. O'Cinneide.

Apologies: VP Biodiversity and Climate Action & Secretary (Jane Stout), Dean of Research (Sinead Ryan), Bursar (Eleanor Denny), PG Student Rep (Luke Gibbons), Chief Technical Officer & Unite Rep. (Maurice Sweeney), Staff Representatives (Dr. Conor O'Kelly and Colm Ennis).

Absent Undergraduate Rep. (Sam Brooks)

In Attendance: Sustainability Manager and minute-taker (Jane Hackett).
Bursar representative Projects and Enablement Manager (Shumane Cleary).

ESC/24-25/36 **No statements of Interest declared.**
No conflicts of interest

ESC/24-25/37 **Minutes from last meeting**
Edit the date which refers to the next finance committee date from Nov to Oct.

ESC/24-25/38 **Key Updates from other Principal Committees**
Critical Infrastructure Committee (CIC) – the committee received updates on SEAI's Gap To Target (GTT) tool which measures progress being made towards GHG targets. The masterplan project has also commenced, and Ailes and Morrison are doing this work and Q2 is when the visioning exercise will be completed by. The project will look at the college from a holistic approach with respect to sustainability, place making, connecting & opening up spaces as well as permeability. Progress has been made to identify buildings which may form part of the decarbonisation plan, a feasibility study will be required to assess the cost of decarbonising the estate.

> Action – Seek an update about the costings for the decarbonisation plan which includes 14 separate projects.
> Action – The Chair will correspond with the Chair of CIC to discuss the benefit of having a joint meeting.

Data Digital & Cyber Security Committee – information was shared about the coming digital transformation and the implications for our GHG emissions.

Finance Committee - there have been two meetings since September with the focus on updates from capital projects, the student centre in Trinity South, the procurement strategy and CRU updates. One of the main items was the budget for 2024/2025 which will be approved by Board in December.

Risk Committee – updates to the college risk register were discussed (risk appetite statement) as well as compliance. The risk statement will go back to the EOG for approval(?).

People & Culture Committee – no updates.

> Action – Update the E&S committee's work programme to include communication between the committee and other principal committees of Board. Consideration should also be given as to whether approval is sought from the committee for any project/programme related to sustainability.

ESC/24-25/39   Work Programme Review

This item was deferred from the September meeting. The work programme was drafted in early 2024 and will be reviewed in January 2025. It will require a RAG status review to show where progress has been made or where progress has been delayed. The January meeting will also require a review to take place of the committee's Terms of Reference as well as reviewing existing timelines to align with key decision-making timelines for budgeting (i.e. June and September). A number of questions were asked by committee members as follows;

- How do we assess the progress of the sustainability strategy?
- How do we draft our annual report?
- How does the committee interact with other principal committees of Board?
- How does the committee influence decision making especially in relation to capital projects?
- Should a governance 'ladder' be taken into consideration where additional time is built into decision making processes?
- Can we use our influence to ensure sustainability criteria are built into the decision making process?

> Action – Develop a RAG status review to show progress on the E&S work programme.
> Action – Develop a survey to review the committee's ToR's and disseminate the survey to members in January 2025.
> Action –Seek updates from the Sustainability Management Group to review progress of the action plan in Q2 and Q4.
> Action – Seek updates in relation to the progress of the Climate Action Plan and GTT in Q2 and Q4.

ESC/24-25/40   Communications

Trinity Sustainability's Communication Officer, Katie Byrne, gave a presentation to the committee which focused on key objectives, case studies that demonstrate what's working, areas of priority and plans for the next six months.

ESC/24-25/41   Sustainability Reporting

FSD's Head of Financial Planning & Analysis, Keith Creedon, gave a presentation to the committee which gave an overview of the ESG Gap Analysis study and report which was commissioned by FSD. The study was undertaken to assist FSD to prepare for non-financial reporting such as the EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). An implementation group will be set up to address the findings of the GAP Analysis report.

ESC/24-25/42   Draft Sustainability Investment Policy

Deputy CFO, Patrick Moore, updated the committee about the draft Sustainability Investment Policy which was approved by the Finance Committee in October. The policy has been updated to reflect the decision to divest from investment in Israeli companies that have operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and appear on the UN Blacklist.

> Action – Consider at what point policies are brought to the committee and if they should be noted or approved by the committee.

ESC/24-25/43   Risk Review

Sustainability Manager, Jane Hackett, brought the committee through the level 2 risk register which has been uploaded to decision time.

> Action – ensure all members of the committee can access the risk register.

ESC/24-25/43   College Strategic Plan

Vice Provost, Orla Sheils, gave a verbal update about the College's Strategic Plan which has 5 agreed pillars, including sustainability, with a focus on digital transformation over the next five years. The focus on digital transformation will require a large amount of funding relating to operational services (CRM, information management, cyber security, wi-fi, services etc). The approach was selected through internal consultation, and they will then go externally for input/advice.

> Action – Raise awareness of the carbon associated with the University's proposed digital transformation especially around Gen AI.

ESC/24-25/44   Trinity Sustainability Updates

This item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

ESC/24-25/45   Culture

This item was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints

AOB

- Next meeting Thursday 23rd January 2025
- West Theatre Meeting Room